

THE DECADE OF ROMA INCLUSION (DRI) – REFORM PROPOSAL

DRI was a chance for Roma people to have a framework which forced the institutions to assume the responsibility looking the roma communities and to which Roma communities and their representatives could refer to, when they asked for Government to allocated funding for Roma community issues, communities that required intervention.

DRI became an argumentative basis, since 2005, for any request of assistance, sent to public institutions, for the implementation of action measures, especially in the field of education, but also in the field of health.

Regarding the proposal to reform the DRI, proposal compiled by the Decade Secretariat, it did exist things that has to be change, in respect to improve various aspects looking: public policy documents at the national level, progress reports, meetings of the Decade, the composition of the Decade, the funds used, the priority areas and participation of Roma to the Decade of Roma inclusion.

After the Bucharest meeting , DFP Romania considers that:

- In present, it needs a new vision for developing a new strategy for Roma inclusion which make the Decade a bigger european project, encompassing fundamental concepts of "unity in diversity, equity and social cohesion", all of them leading to the transformation of the Roma minority in the European minority.
- In Romania, a conjugate effort of the National Agency for Roma and Roma civil society could lead to the formation of a national network which create policies for Roma, at the national level.
- The dialogue between Government institutions and civil society should lead to a vision and a mission with a pragmatic approach on Roma inclusion.

Regarding the guideline "POLICY DOCUMENTS AND STRUCTURES ON NATIONAL LEVEL" (Strategy and structures at national level), DFP Romania considers:

- The Decade must be reformed starting from a clear analysis of what has been achieved within the framework of the Decade and what has not been achieved, and depending on it to propose new mechanisms of participation, of partnerships between countries and support for the EU and non-EU countries.

Summarising the achievements of Romania, we can say that Romania has: one roma deputy, one roma MEP, representatives in some of the key ministries, a Strategy of Roma inclusion, but all this should be pursued and assessed.

At the same time, DFP Romania considers that, in present, must exist a process of consultation of the Roma communities in order to support the decisions regarding the involvement in a new Decade. Ten years were not enough to solve the problems of the Roma people and the future requires "a strong and mature voice" of Roma people that know well the issues and to support the implementation of the appropriate public policies, which have to be:

- strong - with effective participation of Roma,
- consistent – that should be contained in the policy packages and decisions taken by the Government in the interests of the Roma,
- in line with public policies addressed to the whole population, not isolated policies regarding only the Roma people
- flexible - regarding different areas

For the countries which will continue the Decade, the proposal would be:

- The action plans has to be transferred to the Secretariat in order to be analysed objectively and compared between countries, to identify the determining factors of progress or blocking initiatives;
- The Secretariat must have a set of indicators and a clear template for reporting and monitoring. Following the same guidelines for the reporting and monitoring process, would facilitate a coherent and comparative analysis of the initiatives, activities and taken measures and also of the results obtained.
- A consistent improvement of the dialogue between the Secretariat and countries member in the Decade, encouraging the participants to take the initiative to communicate and enhance direct communication between countries.
 - Regarding the guideline "DECADE MEETINGS", DFP Romania considers that is important to exist concrete proposals on the number of meetings, like quarterly and themed meetings of the Decade.

Regarding the guideline "MEMBERSHIP"- As it was pointed out at the meeting in Bucharest, february this year, as regards the membership of the DRI, in Romania, in present, there are 2

visions influenced by members characteristics – countries which are members in the European Union and Non- EU countries. The EU-countries are influenced by national policies, the EU agenda, the european financial support through the ESF and Non-EU countries - which must find solutions for financing Roma inclusion. DFP Romania proposes that the dialogue of the Decade to be one characterized by partnerships and efficiency for countries not willing to give up membership (Hungary), but understand how important it is a space for dialogue and want to join the Decade (Ukraine and Moldova).

As regards the quality of members of the Decade - we consider that it can keep the current structure, but must be admitted and considered that States which require a Decade, as well as Ukraine and Moldova, with the possibility to adjust the criteria for States that want to join it.

Regarding the guideline "SESSION v: FUNDING" , DFP Romania considers:

- It is need to be transparency concerning the list of countries which have contributed to the financing of the DRI, the amount sent and very important is the establishment of other sources of financing the meetings of the Decade.

Regarding the guideline "PRIORITY AREAS" DFP Romania considers that the:

- Intervention Areas must remain: habitation, employment, education, health, anti-discrimination
- Regarding the separating action's plans of the Decade from the Roma Inclusion Strategies, we agree that they may be one and the same document because the priority areas are the same, just that you have improved the points that never worked. (Anyway, the action's plan must be part of a Strategy which contains it).
- Regarding the guideline "ROMA PARTICIPATION", DFP Romania considers:
 - in the new Decade, the Roma must have a wider participation and inclusiveness to be done at all levels. To do this, must be allocated resources, time, energy and involvement of leaders who must understand their importance in the decision process and have more confidence in them.
 - If we mention the participation of Roma, in the new reports must be included the point of views of NGOs, not only of the institutions./shadow report.
 - The Presidency is supposed to remain still for a period of one year for each country because everything begins as a project and needs to have time to be completed, and during the Presidency, a member of the respective country must fill the Secretariat of the Decade.
 - In the new Decade, the Secretariat should be informed regarding the establishment of a National Trust Fund by law in each country. If you have not done this, the Secretariat have to give advices to the countries which do not have establish this Fund, following the model of Romania.

- The Secretariat must provide consulting to the countries which take the Presidency - it requires strengthening the civil society capacity to know how to ask Governments legislative measures as the Decade to have plans of action and funds approved, to make exact budget lines for the plan of action of the Decade.
- The Secretariat must consult the taxpaying States looking the optimal spending of amounts collected and increase the transparency of the use of funds.
- The Secretariat should propose to that States who will continue the Decade that the Governments must create specific positions in institutions in sectoral areas for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation the measures proposed in the action plans/strategies for Roma inclusion, to avoid loading the job descriptions of the staff with additional tasks relating to the activities of the Decade's plan.
- The relocation of the Secretariat of the Decade in one of the countries which will continue the Decade, in case Hungary retains its position of withdrawing the Decade.
- DFP Romania considers that must be create a mechanism for cooperation between the EU and non-EU countries, especially for the fact that the EU is a strategic partner that is interested in the Roma issue. Decade may become a common space for dialogue and action.
- It must be create a strategic partnership between the European Commission and DRI to promote the policies for Roma and to establish the Foundation of the Roma European Agency.
- The vision of the Decade must fold on the EU policies, because of the existence of the possibility of the accession to the EU of other countries from the Decade, which at the moment are not members of the EU. It remains to be considered the position of each country within the DRI and must be find the method of adjustment to EU policies, whether through an amendment to the proposed policy, either through structuring a new vision.
- It must exist a bilateral exchange of positive practices between Decade's contries, with the support of the Secretariat, to know and to build together. Decade should take into account the exchange of positive practices between EU and Non-EU contries and the promotion of positive practices.
- DFP Romania considers that reform of the Decade may start from the possibility of concluding regional partnerships for accesing structural funds by all countries participating in the Decade with the main applicant an EU country.
- Decade can forge the ability to be a tool of advocacy, both at the national level, in each of the Member States, but also internationally.
- If the Decade is not a convincing voice for EU States, the Decade may be extinguished/disbanded, non EU contries can continue in a modified structure, with different

support. DFP Romania considers that it should be born in another Decade, if only we have the common arguments, common vision and common belief, otherwise DRI does not have sense.